September 13, 2006

Public Notice for Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects)

Trinity County DOT –Rush Creek Rd. Culvert Repair Project
WDID No. 1A06103WNTR

Trinity County

On July18, 2006, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the California Department of Transportation requesting Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) for the Trinity County Department of Transportation (DOT), Rush Creek Road (County Road 204) culvert repair project at Post Mile 7.1 in the vicinity of Lewiston, Trinity County (T34N, R9W, S27). Regional Water Board staff deemed the application complete on August 18, 2006. The proposed project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States associated with the Douglas City Hydrologic Subarea No. 106.31.

The proposed project involves an unnamed intermittent tributary to Rush Creek, which is a tributary to the upper main stem Trinity River, below the Lewiston Dam. The purpose of the proposed project is to replace the headwalls of two culverts damaged during the January 2006 winter storm event, which subsequently caused failure of the road embankment. The applicant proposes to replace the headwalls on two culverts which drain to an unnamed tributary to Rush Creek, a tributary to Trinity River. The two culverts are 24-inch metal corrugated pipes with 20-inch diameter plastic liners. The pipes are intact; only the headwalls and the road embankment on the upstream side of Rush Creek Road were damaged in the storm event. The material removed from the channel on an emergency basis, shortly following the failure, will be used for backfill in the construction of the headwalls. The applicant proposes to install two new headwalls, 8-inches thick by 3.5 feet wide and 8 inches around the pipe inlet. The proposed headwalls will be constructed of concrete poured into plywood forms. The applicant proposes to mix the concrete on site in a portable hand mixer. The fill slope repair area is 3 feet high, measured from the top of the culvert to the elevation of the road shoulder. Approximately one cubic yard of streambed material will be removed to allow work space for the headwall construction. The proposed project will take place during the dry season. If water is present in the stream, the applicant proposes to divert the flow from one culvert to the other during construction activities. After one headwall is constructed, and the concrete is dry, the plywood form will be removed, and the diversion will be redirected to the completed culvert while the second culvert is being constructed.

Vegetation removal will involve one immature willow shrub and a few Himalayan blackberry vines. No other vegetation will be removed to access the site nor for construction activities. The applicant will use an excavator or backhoe, operating from upland areas, to perform all required excavation. The applicant proposes to use an area

adjacent to the site to stockpile materials, create a concrete washout, percolation basin for groundwater and stage equipment. The lined concrete washout will be constructed by digging a depression, 6 x 6 x 2 feet surrounded by a one foot berm, located in the flat upland area approximately 20 feet from the ordinary high water line. Concrete-laden water will be allowed to evaporate and then the liner and concrete residue will be disposed of at a sanitary landfill. In addition, the applicant proposes to construct an unlined basin, 10 x 6 x 2 feet, approximately 10-feet from the channel. This unlined basin will be used to pump any groundwater that enters the excavation sites at the pipe inlets during the headwall construction. Water from the excavations will be allowed to infiltrate into the ground and the depression will be filled with native earthen material at the completion of the proposed project. The applicant proposes to perform activities between June 15 and October 15 in 2006 or 2007. Project activities will be conducted over the course of three weeks during low flow.

Known sensitive or listed species in the project area include Federally Threatened Southern Oregon/Northern California Coho salmon, Chinook salmon, western yellow-billed cuckoo, bald eagle, Pacific fisher, and Northern Spotted Owl. The applicant estimates that proposed project schedule and low flow conditions will avoid and minimize potential impacts for sensitive and listed species. Compensatory mitigation is not required for this project. Non-compensatory mitigation measures include implementation of Best Management Practices for sediment/ erosion control and equipment operation. Equipment will not enter the channel. Temporary floating absorbent booms will be placed across the culvert outlets or inside the culverts during the construction activities to contain accidental discharge of petroleum products.

The proposed project is authorized under the United States Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permit 3 for *Maintenance* and 33 for *Temporary Construction, Access, and Dewatering*, (67 Fed. Reg. 2020, January 15, 2002), pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1344). On July 12, 2006, the DOT, as lead agency, determined that the project was categorically exempt in accordance with Article 19, section 15302 (Replacement or Reconstruction) of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines. The applicant has applied for a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (1600-1608) with the California Department of Fish and Game.

Regional Water Board staff propose to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act authority. In addition, staff will consider all comments received during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this letter and ends at 5:00 p.m on the last day of the comment period. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Diana Henrioulle at (707) 576-2350 or Catherine Woody at (707) 576-6723 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.